

Apple Box Talks – Interview with Julia Neville

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[Theme Song]

CB: IATSE 891 presents Apple Box Talks

HB: The podcast where we get to talk to the very best in entertainment, the artists and technicians of IATSE 891.

CB: From prep to post and everything in between, we create worlds on screens of all sizes. Welcome to part two of our educational series for IATSE 891's podcast, "Apple Box Talks." I'm your business representative, Crystal Braunwarth.

HB: And I'm Hillary Bergshoeff. Today we welcome long-standing IATSE member, Julia Neville, to the Apple Box.

CB: Julia is a pioneer who helped lay the groundwork for a thriving BC film industry. She is a champion of workers, an organizer, an advocate, and has served as an IATSE international rep for nearly two decades. Welcome Julia.

JN: Thank you for having me.

CB: So, let's just start at the very beginning. Can you tell us the origination story of how we got to where we are now with the BC Council of Film Unions from the Vancouver basic over the years?

JN: Well, it all goes back to the '90s when we had the Vancouver basic agreement, which was 891 only. It was what we call a promulgated agreement in that it did not have any long-term signatory employers. So because of that, every single show had to negotiate a contract, essentially, with that as the template. We did end up with some long-term agreements with local producers. Colleen Nystedt and Matthew O'Connor and their respective companies had long-term agreements with 891. But for the most part, all of our US -based work was negotiated on a show-by-show basis. And that was true for all of the other unions in BC as well in the film industry. So this was a high volume time for us. It was the era of movies of the week in particular. And it was not unusual for there to be many dozens of shows in a year that would need to be negotiated. And it became clear that even though the union did its best to be consistent in those contracts, they were not always consistent, and the volume was simply unmanageable. So, in 1995, the BC Labour Board created the BC Council of Film Unions, and it was comprised of 891, IATSE 669, the Cinematographer's guild, and Teamsters 155. The other two unions that we worked with the Union of BC Performers and the Director's Guild of Canada were not part of the council, but the BC government at the time reserved the right to reopen what they call the section 41 if they felt that it was worth putting the Director's Guild and UBCP into the council.

CB: So section 41 can be a bit of an anomaly for our membership. Can you explain what section 41 is?

JN: Well it's a government process and it is what was used to create the BCCFU, the BC Council of Film Unions. It has been used in other sectors as well and essentially it boils down to the government looking for and industry looking for stability in a sector and a Council of Film Unions is sometimes the way to do that and that's what happened with us because what we ended up getting out of the section 41 was a long-term agreement, which we call the master agreement, that covers all three unions and no longer do we have what we call the promulgated one-off agreements that we had to negotiate for every single show. Most of our work here in BC has always been US based. Employers could budget for this province knowing that there was a term agreement in place, and they knew what the terms and conditions would be in advance. So they could cost out a location, confidently, and be able to bring their work here with certainty. And because of the short

timelines for motion picture production, there often isn't a lot of lead time to set up a show ahead of time. So this was extremely beneficial for the industry here in BC and precipitated what has become one of the largest production centers on the continent.

HB: So, it's not uncommon when there's a new contract that people immediately up to the wage table, they look at it and see what it pertains to them and then they're done with the book. But there's been years and years of work put into building those terms and conditions. Can you talk a little bit more about the importance of looking at the contract as a whole?

JN: Well, I understand that the wage is often what's most appealing and that has gone up every year since the inception of the master and it compounds. And I think that's an important component. So I understand that a lot of people just don't, you know, they don't care about the rest of the stuff in the agreement. But there are a lot of things in there that really protect our workers. And we really have two groups of workers. I think the contract really comes into play in two different areas. There's the onset component. And there's a lot of terms and conditions that pertain to onset work that are extremely beneficial, that protect things like your length of time off between shifts, working without a break. These are all very important. And then there's another set of terms and conditions for what we call the offset or off production crew. And 891 really is a mix of both of those. We have some departments that cross over and work in both areas. But it really is an interesting mix of workers. And we all come from somewhere. I come from the production office. And so in my job in the production office, the onset provisions in the agreement didn't have any personal meaning for me. I didn't, you know, I didn't get meal penalty, for example, or turn around, but I think it's important for our members to understand the agreement as a whole because it is an amazing document that covers such a wide range of crafts. If you look at the makeup of the local, it's our great strength that we have a multi-craft local, and it's also our great challenge because the needs and desires for those crafts are markedly different. But it's only by the members in each department understanding the other departments that we understand our strength as a union as a whole. It's an amazing thing. At times it's very frustrating. But that to me is the strength of the agreement, is that it is a multi-craft agreement. When you factor in that the Teamsters and IATSE 669 are also covered in it, there's really no other agreement on the continent that has this many crafts covered under one agreement.

CB: Just rolling back to the history pieces again. Talk to us about what precipitated the 2012 Labour Board opening section 41 again.

JN: Well, it goes back to 2008, when 891 was quite actively organizing at the time. And we were applying for certification on shows that had unrepresented workers. There are 891 members who also worked at ACFC. And 891 filed multiple certifications on ACFC shows as well, sometimes in conjunction with the Teamsters, sometimes in conjunction with 669, sometimes in conjunction with the BCCFU, all of which ended up creating a bit of a stir, shall we say, at the BC Labour Relations Board because we had so much activity and the Canadian employers in particular who are the ones that primarily use ACFC were unhappy about the volume. I believe we had 42 applications for certification at the BC Labour Board and it precipitated the reopening of the section 41 with Vice-Chair Michael Fleming overseeing it and there were several things that came out of that in decisions a couple of years later, 2010, that lead into what we are currently in a fight about, which is the Safe Harbour Agreement. That all came sort of through that period of time from the section 41 that was opened in 2008.

HB: So another hot button topic we know comes up all the time. What's a Safe Harbour Agreement, Julia?

JN: A Safe Harbour Agreement is essentially an agreement between an employer and a union that gives a production protection from strike action. And they do exist in other jurisdictions and sometimes there are reasons why a union will go along with such a concept. But BC is the only jurisdiction where they are mandated. And that came through the section 41 in 2010 and at the time it served a purpose again going back to the origin of the section 41 which was all about Labour stability in the province. The idea being that this would create Labour stability if producers could know that they would not have job action on a production that they were bringing up. However, taking away a union's right to strike is a pretty fundamental issue. And there were several things that have happened since that have changed the landscape. And this, as I said, this goes back to 2010. But in 2015, there were three Supreme Court of Canada cases that enshrined or codified a union's right to strike in Canada. And that has changed how the unions look at the safe harbour agreements. And I think, you know, my understanding is that everyone agrees that if parties want to voluntarily enter into an agreement, that's fine. They have the authority to do so if they want to. It's the imposition of it. It's the mandating of the Safe Harbour by the BC Labour Relations Board that we now have an issue with, and that's

what the challenge at the BC Labour Relations Board is about, is about the imposition of the Safe Harbour Agreement. Nobody is saying we shouldn't have them at all. We're just saying we want the right to decide whether we want them or not.

CB: So just to give our listeners some context around where safe harbour is at now, there was a challenge to safe harbour last year to the Labour board brought forth by the BCCFU; and They essentially ruled against it - upheld their original decision on it, and then the BCCFU appealed for a reconsideration. So that is still ongoing in its process so we still have this imposition upon us until we get any sort of different decision from the Labour board. And we just don't know when that ruling will come down.

JN: Well, that's right. And at its core, the challenge is over the changes that have happened in the legal landscape in Canada since this was originally imposed. And it's unfortunate that they ruled against us in their initial decision. And we're hopeful that they will consider the Supreme Court of Canada cases, which is really what we are aligned with and preserving the union's right to strike.

HB: So Julia, we're obviously as a local looking forward now to a new bargaining cycle, the current agreement needing to be reopened and all the preparation that's going into that right now. You've been part of every bargaining process, in some way, since the first agreement, as you mentioned, can you give us an idea of what kind of preparations go into that work in these months ahead of time?

JN: Absolutely. So, 891 has a bargaining committee, as do the two other unions in the council, the Teamsters and the camera local, and the master agreement is divided into sections. There's what we call the main table, which is the main body of the agreement that affects all three unions. And then we have the side table, which are sort of appendixes to the agreement that are specific to each council member union. So, for each of the union's bargaining committees, they really have two things they need to look at. They need to look at things that are specific to their local only and into this section would fall departmental issues, issues specific to a classification, what classifications are included in the agreement, as an example. And then on the main table items, the committees are also tasked with prioritizing what's important for the whole. And initially, the groups all sort of work independently and come up with their bargaining items, and then they get together with the committees from the two other unions and work collectively. Obviously, when it comes to the side table issues, each union kind of keeps to their own because that's our business, but on the main table there's often lots of discussion with the other committees about prioritizing the items on the main table. And the items in the main table tend to be the money items, so that's where you would find wage increases, increases to benefits like the health plan and the RRSP. It's also where things like meal penalty would be addressed or mileage. Those are all main table items. And we're always up against a limited amount of time when we're in bargaining with the employers. And so, the goal in Prep - we're now, we've been prepping for quite some time already at the local level, is to have your ducks in a row as best you can before you get into the meetings with the producers and talk through as many scenarios as you can for when you have to be flexible in bargaining. What is your plan B, what is your plan C, what are the alternates that you can come up with that might work if this option isn't going to pan out, that kind of thing. So, sometimes there are committee members who have been around for a long time that are very helpful as resources and that understand the process but there's also a learning curve for a lot of the committee members who may be doing this for the first time to understand the agreement as a whole and we all come from a departmental perspective initially and so that's always a big challenge for bargaining committee members is to move beyond their departmental perspective to think about the whole. Particularly in a multi-craft local, this is a challenge because we all have very specific departmental issues that are near and dear to us, but at the end of the day, the good of the whole has to really prevail. So, I think that's the primary focus of the bargaining committee.

CB: And just, again, to just provide a little more context for our listeners here, we start by distributing a bargaining survey to the membership and our last bargaining survey yielded over 800 pages of data for us to distill down into what are the core top issues for our membership overall and then distill that even more to departmental issues and then we go through those departmental issues with each department and that's how we come up with our side table items and the bargaining committee will then prioritize those. So, there's something called pattern bargaining that we hear a lot about. Can you talk to us about what that is and how that impacts bargaining in general across North America?

JN: Sure, so we don't work in a vacuum. In BC, we have a long history of successful production of motion picture and television and streaming product. But there are many other jurisdictions in North America with term agreements, and many other unions that also bargain term agreements. And so we're part of a community that

is bigger than BC. And our agreements are not all on the same cycles, and they're very different. They're markedly different from one jurisdiction to the next. But, they do tend to have patterns in them and so where our bargaining falls in a cycle will be affected by the agreements that have been negotiated prior to that. And as an example I would use last summer the DGA and SAG went on strike in the States and the agreements that they came out of that with ultimately have affected any agreements that have been bargained since then. So it's not to say that we automatically get what they got, because the agreements are so different that that's often not how it plays out. But there are similarities and there are often things that may not be monetary in nature, but that are similar. The two big examples I can think of in recent history would be the introduction of the new media language, which all of the North American contracts, you know, ended up with some version of in a side letter, and our language around diversity initiatives. BC, you know, has language in our agreements that has been informed by language that's been bargained elsewhere and conversely, I think what's been bargained elsewhere has been informed by things we've bargained here as well. So it's quite fluid. We tend to have three -year patterns and I think the most notable change that I see as a very positive one is that in 2023, we extended the master agreement by one year. And what that did in the cycle of pattern bargaining I believe was very beneficial. And so now we are going into bargaining just after, like six months after, our U.S. counterparts with the IATSE basic agreement and the area standards agreement which were negotiated in the summer of 2024- rather than coming in just ahead of their bargaining and what that means is that in our old cycle because we were all on three year patterns - they would get something in bargaining but we would have bargained just prior to them so we would have to wait another cycle to get what they got in their agreements. I think the extension by one year so that we're coming six months after their bargaining is really helpful in catching us up to some of the provisions that are being bargained elsewhere.

CB: I completely agree with that. And you said a word in there that I would love you to explain to people. What is a side letter? How does that fit into a master agreement?

JN: Well, a side letter is a part of the agreement. You know, we have a lot of them in the master agreement and when you read them they don't always make a lot of sense because some of them are sort of obsolete to be honest. But they are often things that are specific to one of the council member unions, not always, but a lot of them are. And there are often things that are not easy that were problems in bargaining and sometimes it's not clear if it's something that's going to live on forever. And so the parties will agree, okay, let's deal with this in a side letter. And so sometimes side letters are intended to be short term in nature. They're not intended to just carry on forever. That's why they're not in the body of the agreement. They're sort of separate. But sometimes they do carry on forever. And I would say, you know, side letter number 12, the visual effects side letter, is an example of that. That came to be in the 2009 agreement. And 15 years later, we still have it. So I think it seems to be a permanent thing. We would like it to be part of the agreement. But sometimes it takes time to make that happen. And I think there's several side letters like that. You know, most of our work is now in the new media area, what we call new media. It's in a side letter. And that, you know, at this point seems a little ridiculous, frankly. But that's my take on side letters.

HB: So we've talked about the survey and going from the big, big amount of data that we've been processing, funneling that down, bringing it to the bargaining committee, coming then to the BCCFU. What happens in the next couple of months?

JN: So the 891 committee is already met and we'll continue to meet. 669 has a committee, Teamsters have a committee. They're all meeting. They're also doing some training in bargaining, which is really helpful. We've got experts that we bring in for that. So over the next couple of months, there will be a meeting of the group of committees together. And it's really, I think, where the groups can get together and discuss their priorities. Not so much the side table issues, which are specific to each union, but the main table ones that cross over all three unions.

CB: So Julia, talk to us a little bit about communication during bargaining, because I know it's always an interesting line to walk where you don't want to give away strategy to the employer potentially, but you still need to inform the membership and keep them up to speed. Talk to us about communication during bargaining.

JN: Yes, it's critically important that the union communicates with its members about the bargaining process. And, you know, we have the committees in place and sometimes the committees will do, you know, outreach to their respective departments. And one thing I will say is in the recent area standards and basic agreement negotiations there was a really robust communications strategy in place and I think we will be doing the same

for this round of BCCFU bargaining. To keep the members informed on where we're at and let them know, to the extent that is reasonable what's happening in bargaining.

HB: What would you say to members who are concerned that they don't have a representative from their own department on the committee?

JN: Well, as I said earlier, the committee has to put forward departmental issues, but they also have to step beyond that to look at the good of the whole. I've been on that bargaining committee and the committee members really do think about the needs of the departments who may not have a representative there and the survey results are really what guides them because essentially you know a lot of the issues that are raised in the survey may not affect your department personally at all but that's the priorities of the membership and so you know in many respects I would say that the bargaining committee's biggest job is actually overcoming the departmental issues to focus on what's important to the majority of the membership.

CB: So I wanna move on to some definitions because our members often have questions around language in the contract like exclusive jurisdiction and what is the supplemental agreement. Could you talk on those two topics for us?

JN: So the exclusive jurisdiction is in the master agreement, it's Article 104, if anybody's interested, and it outlines what the scope of the agreement is, and it's quite limited. And by exclusive, what that means is that the Labour board in creating the council and this agreement at the very beginning gave the council automatic rights of representation in a very specific area. And that area is high budget feature films and production of one hour episodic series, including one hour pilots for prime time exhibition on ABC, CBS and NBC. Now this was in 1995, it has not changed. So that's the scope of the agreement in terms of what is mandatory. When a producer comes to British Columbia and has a project in that area, it is automatically a council show and the master agreement applies. That's what exclusive jurisdiction means. The reality is that most of the work done here is in the non-exclusive area. It's not mandated by the contract or by the government, but employers choose to use the council agreement anyway, and that covers everything else. Everything that doesn't fit in that little bucket of exclusive jurisdiction is what we call the non-exclusive work, and I don't know what the current percentage of that work is, but it's been well over 90 % of the council work for the whole time, I think. So, you know, we talk about the exclusive jurisdiction, but in reality, it no longer really means anything because the bulk of our work has and always has been in the non-exclusive area because employers choose to use the council agreement.

HB: So is that where the term "voluntary recognition" comes from?

JN: So voluntary recognition is a term that as opposed to a certification, it means that an employer and a union have agreed to a collective agreement together. The other option is a certification where a union certifies to represent workers with an employer and a contract comes out of that. But almost all of the work done in BC under the BC master agreement are voluntary recognition agreements.

CB: And so talk to us about the lesser known supplemental agreement that's in the book.

JN: Prior to the supplemental agreement, we had something called Appendix D and Appendix D was essentially made to address movies of the week and Canadian lower budget Canadian product, because the agreement at the time didn't really have rates that a producer could do that work under if they had a lower budget show. So the supplemental is intended to cover that type of work. And that's where the tiers come from. Tier one, tier two, those are part of the supplemental agreement. And they have rates that are reduced from the regular feature and television rates in the main part of the agreement. And that's actually where a lot of our work now happens.

CB: And is it common to have supplemental agreements across contracts? Is this exist in other jurisdictions?

JN: Yeah, it's not necessarily called a supplemental agreement, but there are often different wage grids for different types of production. That's extremely common. So yes, it's not necessarily called a supplemental, but the premise is the same.

CB: And how does the television, because we get this question quite a bit too, how does the television one - year lag, how do lag rates work?

JN: Essentially lag rates are exactly what they say, it's a one -year lag. So rather than working on the current year's rates, the production is allowed to pay the scale rates from the previous year's cycle. And all of this, of course, is just pertaining to the scale rates.

CB: And just for television.

CB: And just for television, yes.

HB: So a significant difference coming into this bargaining round is that we are not dealing with COVID in Zoom conditions and the protracted time of trying to coordinate things like that, doing everything by Zoom. How does that impact things for the bargaining team in terms of the differences of bargaining in person?

JN: Well, I'm a big proponent of in-person bargaining. And I just think that it's more productive for both sides. Bargaining by Zoom, particularly when you've got groups that are as large as these groups are, when you can't see everybody, when you've got five screens you've got to scroll through just to see who's in the room. It's very challenging. We did it. I would never want to do it again. But one of the things that's great about in -person bargaining is that when you're in the room bargaining, everyone there is forced to be there. You have to be in the moment. You have to really focus on what you're there to do. And human nature is such that by zoom, you know, people wander, and you don't get the opportunity to have the same kinds of discussions. In zoom, only one person can talk at a time, just the way it's set up. So it stills the flow of discussion. And I'm really happy that we're back to in person bargaining. And as has been the practice in the past, we are splitting the bargaining between in person in Vancouver and in person in Los Angeles, so there will be meetings in both places.

CB: Yeah, and another part of the process that we missed during COVID is the process of consultative, as we call it, and we have a consultative meeting booked in person with the AMPTP in the first part of October. Tell us traditionally what consultative has looked like to you and what its purpose is.

JN: So it's in the collective agreement and it's a Labour relations requirement in British Columbia and it's intended for the parties to get together to talk about things that come up during the term of the agreement. And it's not necessarily, um, intended to, you know, have a big fight, but it's less formal. It's not bargaining. You're not negotiating at a consultative meeting, but you're bringing awareness to issues that have come up. And because these terms are three years long, that's a relatively long period of time. So there are often things that come up that weren't contemplated. Sometimes there will be changes made to the agreement, and there will be unintended consequences from those changes. And the consultative meeting is an opportunity for the parties to discuss how things are going. Really, how, how is it going? How is the agreement going? What's new? What are you seeing? What's coming up? It's, you know, as I say, it's less formal. It has been quite helpful. And it's been a very long time since we've had one. I think it was before COVID that there was a consultative meeting. So at least five years since we've had one, we used to have them once a year.

CB: It's a real opportunity for both sides to work something out so it doesn't have to hit the bargaining table.

JN: Yeah. Yeah, I agree.

HB: So some of the criticism we've received focuses around, You've talked a little bit about the training that's required for people sitting on the bargaining committee, and it has come up from people about the concerns about not having had a professional negotiator at the table. What's different about this bargaining session going into it?

JN: Well, we always have professional people with us. We've never been alone. Let me be clear. And this time is no different. You know, we've got each of the council member unions has their own legal counsel. We also have legal counsel for the BC Council film unions, Tony Glavin, who is also our chief spokesperson this time. And this mirrors what we did for many years when Bruce Lawton was the lawyer for the council and was also the chief spokesperson. And I will say, you know, I used to be more open -minded about bringing in outsiders to, you know, professional negotiators, that kind of thing. But what I have come to realize after decades of bargaining agreements is that nobody knows the agreements better than the people that work under them. And you want to have professional people there to draft language who know the right legal terms to use for things, but when it comes to talking about the impact in the workplace, it's the workers that bring that to the table. And some of the gains that we've made in the master agreement have come from workers standing up in bargaining and explaining something. This is what it means. This is how it impacts people personally. You're

sitting across the table from people who have never worked on a film set. So they benefit from our expertise, and I think we underestimate our own expertise in this area. We live it and breathe it every day. So you can't measure the importance of that. That's more important than anything else. The lawyers can help with everything else in terms of drafting, but The impact of the agreement is best discussed by the workers themselves.

CB: I completely and totally agree with you. And where the one-to-one meetings with departments impacted and then drilling down into, okay, it's a position that's impacted and having those conversations with the people who - their work life changed based on this proposal. So the conversation is definitely with the subject matter experts and bringing them in during bargaining. The one -place Zoom can be very handy is having their voices.

JN: Yes, and we've done that a lot over the years. If there's a specific issue that a departmental representative can speak to, they may not be on the bargaining committee. They may not be at all the meetings but we've often brought someone in just to talk about something specific and it's been really helpful.

CB: Okay so let's come closer to the end. So bargaining has happened we have what's called a tentative agreement so now what happens?

JN: So when there's a tentative agreement at the table the unions then go back to their memberships and the council, because it's three different unions, they will usually have a council communication that will go out to the membership of all three unions. And there will be town halls to explain what happened and what articles mean and what was negotiated where people can ask questions. So I expect that will be the process again. And sometimes we've just done it through the council. Sometimes it's been done through the locals as well.

HB: So for newer members who might not be aware, last time we did a series of podcasts just like this one, to talk through some of the most...

CB: -challenging

HB: ...challenging is exactly the word to use. Some of the most challenging topics that were in front of the membership coming up to that ratification vote.

CB: And tell us what the memorandum of agreement is because it comes into play during the ratification process and tentative agreement.

JN: Right, so a memorandum of agreement is essentially everything that was agreed to at the table. It hasn't yet been turned into a whole new full agreement. So in order to figure out what the memorandum of agreement means, you really need to have the existing agreement and the memorandum, because the memorandum doesn't include anything that wasn't touched. The memorandum only references changes to the agreement. And then once it's ratified, they create a new document that folds the memorandum into the agreement and you get a new little booklet. -

CB: So essentially the memorandum is a summary.

JN: It's a summary of the changes and sometimes it's not even a summary, it's actually the contract language with everything spelled out in it, but it is only the changes.

CB: I guess one of the things that our members really had to deal with given our last 18 month round that we went through was the issue of retroactivity. Can you talk to us about that?

JN: Yes. So when you go past the expiration of the term, the agreement carries forward, and whenever you do negotiate a new agreement, you may or may not negotiate retroactivity. It varies. I can tell you that it's common to get retroactivity in many agreements, we have not always been successful in getting it here. And even when we have gotten it, it's been a nightmare in how it was administered. You know, this is partly why there's so much energy put into concluding an agreement before the expiration of the term, so that we don't get into dealing with issues of retroactivity.

CB: And could you define retroactivity for those who might not know?

JN: So retroactivity is essentially, you know, let's say your agreement expires at the end of March, you don't get a contract until August, say, so you've got, you know, four months, and you negotiate increases. Now sometimes what's negotiated is increases as of the date of ratification. So it's going forward only with no

retroactivity. Sometimes you negotiate increases back to the expiration of the contract last March. So in that case, every show that's been working from the end of the term until the ratification then has to go back and calculate what their workers should have been paid based on the new rates that were negotiated. That's retroactivity.

HB: So we are absolutely in the age of social media and people are always going to talk. But there is a principle called bargaining in the media. Could you explain a little bit about that for us?

JN: Sure. So when we begin bargaining, we agree to terms about how we're going to bargain. And one of those terms is commonly an agreement between the parties that they're not going to bargain in the media. And what this means is essentially what it says, which is that neither side is going to go to Deadline and talk about bargaining until it's done. Once there's a tentative agreement, then, you know, it kind of opens up and the documents become public and the media will do whatever they will do with it. But I think it's a key principle, especially, you know, given the size of the industry and the fascination the media has with it, that we are allowed to bargain without outside interference, essentially. So not bargaining in the media is a part of that.

CB: And that's kind of part of a protocol agreement that's established before bargaining begins, correct?

JN: That's correct, yeah.

HB: So what advice would you give to members who are anxiously waiting for updates while bargaining is going on?

JN: Well, I think the structure of 891 is such that I would hope that the departmental chairs would be a good resource because the executive committee is comprised of the departmental chairs and I am sure that the local will be doing communications to members as well. But going to your departmental chair is probably a good place to start and the bargaining committee will endeavor to keep the executive committee of the local as updated as they can.

CB: So Julia is there anything else you'd like to share with us given your history with 891 and how much of your life you've dedicated to this agreement?

JN: I will say that I think bargaining the collective agreement is the single most important thing that the union does. I feel pretty strongly about it. I love it because I think it is collaborative in the same way that film and television production is collaborative. And you're forced to find solutions to problems in a constructive way. So I wish that more members were engaged and involved with the bargaining process. I understand that a lot of people just want to flip to the wage they make and they don't want to think about any of the rest of it, but it really is the document that governs how we work. It's critically important and this is a mature agreement and it's hefty, it's long, it's a lot to get through but once you understand it you see the changes that are made which seem to some to be incremental very tiny changes but that's what labour relations is about and I look at agreements like this one which is 20 some years on and I look at agreements in the states that are 50 some years on and you see the gains that are made over a long period of time. It's not always about what you can get in the moment. It's about looking at it as part of the continuum and we may not get everything we want but we'll make incremental gains and that's what it's all about.

HB: And I think you've touched on something really important there is that this document belongs to the membership and it's readily available to you on the website. It's, it's your document to read and understand and to own and how it impacts you personally and that there's an element of personal responsibility that comes with saying, this is what impacts me and the people that I care about. So you also touched on engagement, which is a theme that's come up through all three of these podcasts in this education series. And we have an election coming up for key roles in the leadership of IATSE 891. What would you say to members looking forward into this cycle about being involved in participating in the election cycle at 891?

JN: Well, I feel pretty strongly that the bargaining of the agreement, as I said before, is the most important thing the union does. And I think officers of the union should see this as their top priority. And unfortunately, it's not always borne out. So, I would say to the membership, look for leaders that are engaged in bargaining and want to be a part of this process. It is the most important thing. I know it's a bit of a slog, but it's essential work and it really does set the table for everything that comes afterwards. –

HB: And showing up to vote is critically important. –

JN: Absolutely, and I understand the heartbreak of not getting something that you really wanted in the agreement or not getting as much as you thought we should get, that kind of thing. But participation in the process is still important. And we don't have a historically high turnout rate. I'm hopeful that it will go up and that members will see this as important as it is.

CB: Well, thank you, Julia. And speaking of participation in the process, you are a part of our bargaining team this round and we greatly appreciate your institutional history and knowledge and just absolute dedication to this IATSE agreement. You are woven throughout every single page. So thank you.

JN: Oh, thank you. This is my favorite thing to do, believe it or not.

HB: And that's a wrap for another episode of Apple Box Talks.

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[theme song]